



Psst!
Lots of cool info about
pads and periods inside...





welcome to your betty follow up guide

So you've had your lesson all about periods and you probably have a few questions, right? While we can't help you with your history homework, or sit that maths test for you – we can help to make you feel OK about starting your period! Whether or not you've started your period, this handy little guide is full to the brim with useful information about that time of the month – from everything you wanted to ask in the lesson (but didn't) to our favourite ways to help you feel better when you are on your period (yep, we mean chocolate).

Don't forget...

...to check out our quick 'How well do you actually know your period facts?' quiz and see how much you remembered from the lesson!

For more period info, lols and loadsa love head to [betty.me](https://www.betty.me) for the puberty lowdown.



**Confidence is not
“they will like me”.**

**Confidence is
“I’ll be fine if they
don’t”**



Top 5 period facts

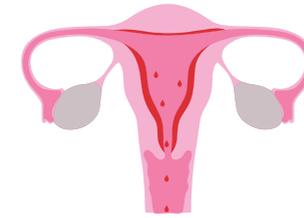
- 1 On average, you’ll only produce between **two and eight tablespoons** of menstrual fluid during your whole entire period.
- 2 The average age for your first period is between **11 and 13** – though some girls get their period as young as 8, others will be more like 16. Either way, it’s all totally fine. It just depends on your body and how it develops.
- 3 Generally, periods last anywhere from **three to seven days**. Once your uterus has stopped jumping up and down with all the excitement of puberty, things should become fairly consistent.
- 4 Your first period can feel like a waiting game, but helpfully there are signs to look out for that could indicate that your body is getting ready to start your periods. Usually **your breasts will begin growing** first, then you might find that you start **producing discharge** and you may also notice **pubic hair** making an appearance. But remember, everybody is different!
- 5 Technically your ‘period blood’ is not just blood. It’s a **mixture of blood and body tissue** that has built up in your uterus over the course of your menstrual cycle. Depending on how heavy your period is, it might come in all sorts of different shades, from dark brown to the palest hint of red.



cut it, save it

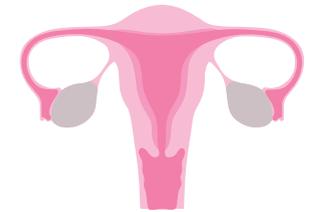


let's have a look at the cycle



Day 1

The start of the cycle, is when bleeding from the vagina begins. This is caused by the loss of the lining of the uterus.



Around day 4-7

The loss of blood stops. The lining of the uterus begins to thicken and get cosy again, whilst an egg cell starts to mature in one of the ovaries.

Day 28

If the egg cell does not meet with a sperm cell, the lining of the uterus begins to break down on day 28 (hello period!) and the cycle repeats.



Around day 14

The mature egg cell is released from the ovary. This is called ovulation. The egg cell travels down the fallopian tube towards the uterus. If the egg cell meets and joins with a sperm cell, it is fertilised. It attaches to the lining of the uterus and the woman becomes pregnant.

OK, back to basics!

What actually is a period? During the menstrual cycle (which lasts around 28 days) the uterus thickens and prepares itself for implantation of a fertilised egg. If the egg is not fertilised then the uterus lining is shed from the body, which is known as menstruation or a "period".



Everything you wanted to ask in the lesson (but didn't)

Hopefully the betty for schools lesson answered (most) of your period questions, but in case we missed anything out, or you just want to double check something, we've put together some of the most Frequently Asked Questions about periods and how to deal with them below!



Q What if I start my period at school or when I'm out with my friends?

A First of all, don't panic. Remember, embarrassing tales will turn into funny ones and you'll soon realise that everything is natural and normal.

If you are a little worried, you could **carry an emergency pad around in your bag** with you just in case you get caught off guard (plus a jumper or hoodie tied round the waist usually can hide the evidence well enough until you can get home!).



cut it, save it

Q How often should I change my pad or tampon? I don't want to smell...

A Changing your pad or tampon **every 3-4 hours** is usually the best thing to do to keep clean and fresh. Naturally, if your period is heavy, you should change your tampon or pad more often because they may get saturated more quickly.

Remember, never leave a tampon in longer than 8 hours!



Q What actually is vaginal discharge?

A Vaginal discharge is a natural mucus that is produced from your cervix. Formed from normal bacteria and fluids, **it's your vagina's way of keeping itself clean** (if only bedrooms did that!).

You normally start producing discharge about six months to a year before your first period. If you want to, you can wear a panty liner to absorb everything. Or not, it's up to you!

Discharge comes out easily in the washing machine (woo!), so it's really about what makes you feel more comfortable.



Q How much blood are we talking here?

A On average, you'll only produce **between two and eight tablespoons** of menstrual fluid during your whole entire period (it can just sometimes feel like loads more). It's common for your period to start heavier and get lighter – both through the week, and as you get older.

But everybody is different. If your period is so heavy that it's making life difficult, have a chat with your doctor or an adult you trust.

Q Will everyone know when I've started my period?

A No one will know that you're on your period unless you tell them - honestly. It's fine to tell other people if you wish, but the truth is **you'll look exactly the same you did the day before**, even if your body or your emotions feel different.



Q What colour is a 'normal' period supposed to be?

A It's totally natural for your period to be **different colours, from dark brown to bright red**. Darker blood tends to be older blood which could be left over from your last cycle, or is just leaving your body more slowly.



Q Everyone keeps talking about getting 'PMS' – what is it?

A PMS stands for **Premenstrual Syndrome**. It's also sometimes known as Premenstrual Tension (PMT) or the monthly blues. Physically, PMS might make you feel a little bloated, tired or achey.

Some people have headaches or backache and some get a few cramps before their period actually arrives. You might find your skin gets a little spotty too. Emotionally, you might find yourself feeling more irritable, anxious, weepy and/or prone to slamming doors. Exercise and a healthy diet will help ease the symptoms. Chat to your doctor or an adult you trust if you're worried.

PERIOD HAPPY PERIOD HAPPY PERIOD HAPPY PERIOD HAPPY

Q Seriously though, is my period going to hurt? I'm slightly nervous...

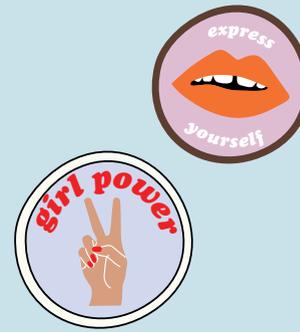
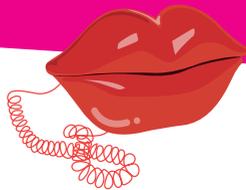
A Period pain is thought to happen because the muscles in the wall of your womb are contracting. Don't worry – **a hot water bottle, a bar of chocolate and some painkillers can usually help ease the cramps** (don't forget to ask an adult first before taking any tablets!). Sometimes you'll barely even notice you're on your period.

But... sometimes, you will experience a little bit of a pain such as cramping. We're not going to lie. Don't worry though, it's totally normal.

Q Can you go swimming on your period, or will I turn the pool red?

A Want to go for a swim when you're on your period? **Dive right on in! There's no reason why you can't** – also, exercise releases endorphins, which can help ease cramps. You need to use a tampon while swimming to keep leaks at bay.

Unfortunately, pads aren't a good idea in the pool as they absorb fluids, so wearing one in the water means it'll become soggy and won't be able to do its job properly. Sorry!



**She turned her can'ts into
cans and made her dreams
into plans**



cut it, save it



what's what...

PERIOD 101



So, what's the right protection for me?

It can feel like there are more types of sanitary product than there are filters and the whole thing can feel a bit overwhelming, but never fear - we're here to break it down for you.

Pads

Pads (also known as sanitary towels) are made of **absorbent material** that you stick, via an **adhesive strip**, to the inside of your underwear. Some have extra material on the sides called '**wings**' that you can fold over the edge of your knickers to make sure your pad doesn't slip around while you're busy being fabulous all day.



Tampons

Tampons are also made of absorbent material, but compressed into a small cylindrical shape and **inserted into your vagina**. Some tampons have **applicators**, which help guide the tampon into place, whereas others you can insert with your finger (just make sure you've washed your hands first!).

Tampons may take a bit of practice to get right, but when they're inserted correctly you shouldn't be able to feel them at all (like, AT ALL).

Liners

Liners are like a **smaller version of a pad** – they look exactly the same but don't usually have wings and are a lot thinner. You can barely feel them in your knickers at all!



Some girls use them for when their period is really light towards the end, or to prevent discharge stains on to their knickers (vaginal discharge totally comes out in the washing machine though, so don't worry if you don't fancy having a permanent pad stuck to your knickers).

PERIOD NTK

Many girls start out using pads because they're a bit simpler to use and then progress to using tampons when they want to exercise or go swimming. Others swear by pads for every occasion, all their lives. And some start with tampons and never look back. **All these options are totally safe, it's just important to work out what's right for you and your body.**

Psst!

If you don't think pads or tampons are for you, don't worry. There's loads of other options you might prefer.

Menstrual cups

Menstrual cups have skyrocketed in use over the last few years. It does exactly what it says on the tin. It is just **a little cup which sits inside you** and collects the fluid. They hold a lot more than tampons can absorb which means that you don't have to worry about changing them as much - perfect for long school days.

They are also **reusable** (you just wash them), cheap and also **environmentally friendly** for all you budding eco-warriors! Like tampons, they can take a tiny bit of practice to learn how to insert them comfortably, but, with practice you'll soon be a pro.



Period pants

Imagine just throwing on a pair of pants and not having to worry about your period at all. Dreamy, right? Well you're in luck because there are a couple of amazing brands out there producing **protective knickers that actually absorb your period**. And not just a few specks here and there either, they hold up to two tampons worth of fluid. Just pop them in the washing machine between uses and away you go.

Reusable pads and tampons

If you want to be a sustainable superstar and the recyclable aspect appeals to you, why not try reusable pads and tampons? They're pretty much identical to standard tampons and pads but instead of binning them, they can **be washed and used again and again**.



Find your perfect fit



Turn over and hello to the betty products

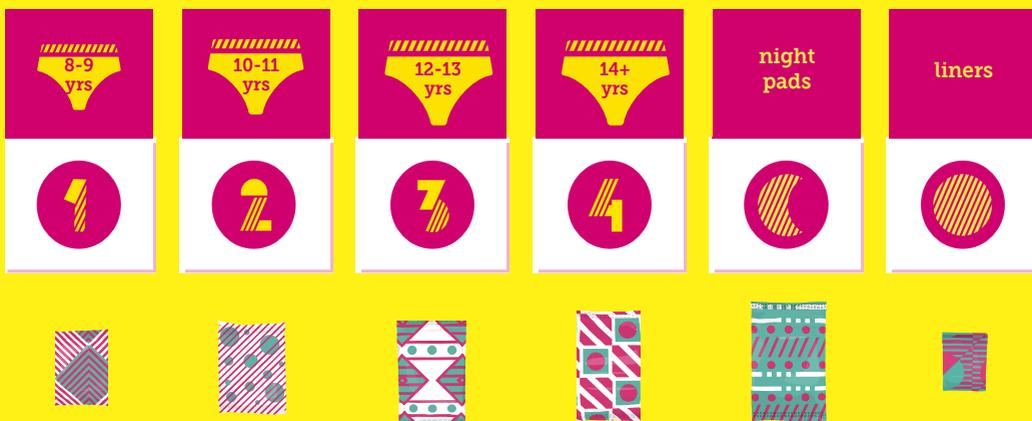
So now that you're clued up on puberty and are feeling like a bit of a period pro, you can start to think about the products that will make your periods much easier to manage.

betty has designed a range especially for young girls like you to help you feel more comfortable and confident - making your period a little less scary, and little more fun.

bettypads

Our pads are made specially for superstar girls like you. Made with **high absorbency** and made to fit smaller bodies, our pads are available in four sizes and are made from **organic cotton** and **super-soft bamboo** for ultimate comfort and max absorbency. They're **biodegradable** too.

You should wear whichever bettypad feels most comfortable for you, but if you need some help, take a peek at our fit chart. Comfort is queen, girls!



Psst!

You can ask your Mum or Dad to go to betty.me/parents to request a free bettypad sample pack for you to try.

pick & mix

Once you've discovered your perfect fit with bettypads, why not **personalise your periods** with our pick & mix box? When it comes to periods, you get to call the shots. Whether you have a heavy flow, are on the lighter side or are a hygiene queen, you can **choose a total of 25 day and night pads, liners and wipes** in your box each month to suit you. Result!

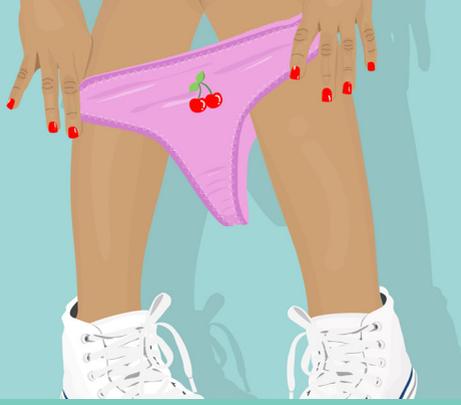


bettybox

bettybox is a **treasure trove of period essentials**. Every month, pads and tampons from your fave brands (including bettypads), plus delish snacks, beauty treats and fun bits for school will be sent **direct to your door in time for your period** - it makes that time of the month a little bit sweeter.



Find your perfect fit and get your bettypads at betty.me



Our favourite ways to make the best of your periods

Premenstrual Syndrome (PMS) can be a bit of a pain, but it's a natural side effect of getting your period. The most important thing to know is that is very real and happens to a lot, but not all women. Symptoms can vary month to month and from person to person.

How do I make it go away?

While there's not much you can do to prevent PMS, there are lots of ways you can help yourself feel better. Eating a balanced, varied diet with lots of fresh fruit and veg could help ease those symptoms.

And while it might be the last thing you feel like doing, regular exercise can also help keep PMS in check, as well as generally making you feel better. That could be a run, a game of netball or simply going on a nice long walk with your family or friends.

As time goes on you'll find your own way to make yourself feel better on your periods – but some of our

favourites are: weeping along to a sad film, having a dance party on your own, doing a cartwheel, doing some crafts or watching videos of unlikely animal friendships. And of course there's the tried and tested method of a big bar of chocolate and a hot water bottle to ease the cramps. We always find that works wonders.

Be kind to yourself, and remember that some people suffer more than others – and it won't last forever. But if you're worried, talk to an adult you trust or a doctor.

There's only so much chocolate a girl can eat.

How well do you actually know your period?

So you've got it sussed – the whole period thing we mean. But let's put that knowledge to the test shall we? See how well you can do on our period-tastic quiz.

- 1 How much blood do you typically lose during your period?**
 - a. 2-8 tablespoons
 - b. A gallon
 - c. Erm, like pint?
- 2 What happens around day 14 of the menstrual cycle?**
 - a. You decide you need a very long nap
 - b. Your eggs go on a trip down your fallopian tubes
 - c. Your period starts – get that pad on!
- 3 What do you think of when we say 'wings'?**
 - a. Little Mix's hit song, duh
 - b. They keep your pad in place while you're busy winning at life
 - c. I'm an angel in real life, they're constantly stuck to my back
- 4 Which one is better pads or tampons?**
 - a. Totally tampons
 - b. Pads are perfect!
 - c. Either are totally fine, duh
- 5 Why do only girls get periods, not boys?**
 - a. Because girls are better, obvs
 - b. Because boys don't have a uterus or ovaries or produce eggs
 - c. Because boys couldn't handle the cramps
- 6 What exactly is vaginal discharge?**
 - a. A natural mucus that is produced from your cervix
 - b. The process when the egg leaves the ovary
 - c. The blood which breaks away from your uterus lining



Time to test your knowledge

All this period talk has probably given you some new words to think about, right? So, we've created a few questions to make sure you're clued up on everything. Don't worry, you'll ace them!

1 Match the word to its correct definition:

Ovulation	The 'monthly blues' feeling just before your period begins
Premenstrual Syndrome	A smaller pad for when your period is light
Discharge	Where the eggs travels from the ovaries to the uterus
Fallopian Tube	When the egg is released from the ovary
Liner	The mucus the cervix produces to keep the vagina clean.

2

Write down your top 3 period facts that you would pass on to a BFF who doesn't know much about what a period is yet:

1.

2.

3.

3

Draw a picture of something that would make you feel better if you or a friend was having a period:

4

Answer the below questions using full sentences:

a. Why can being on your period sometimes cause tummy pains?

b. How often should you change a pad?

c. How often should you change a tampon? Why can you not keep it in longer?

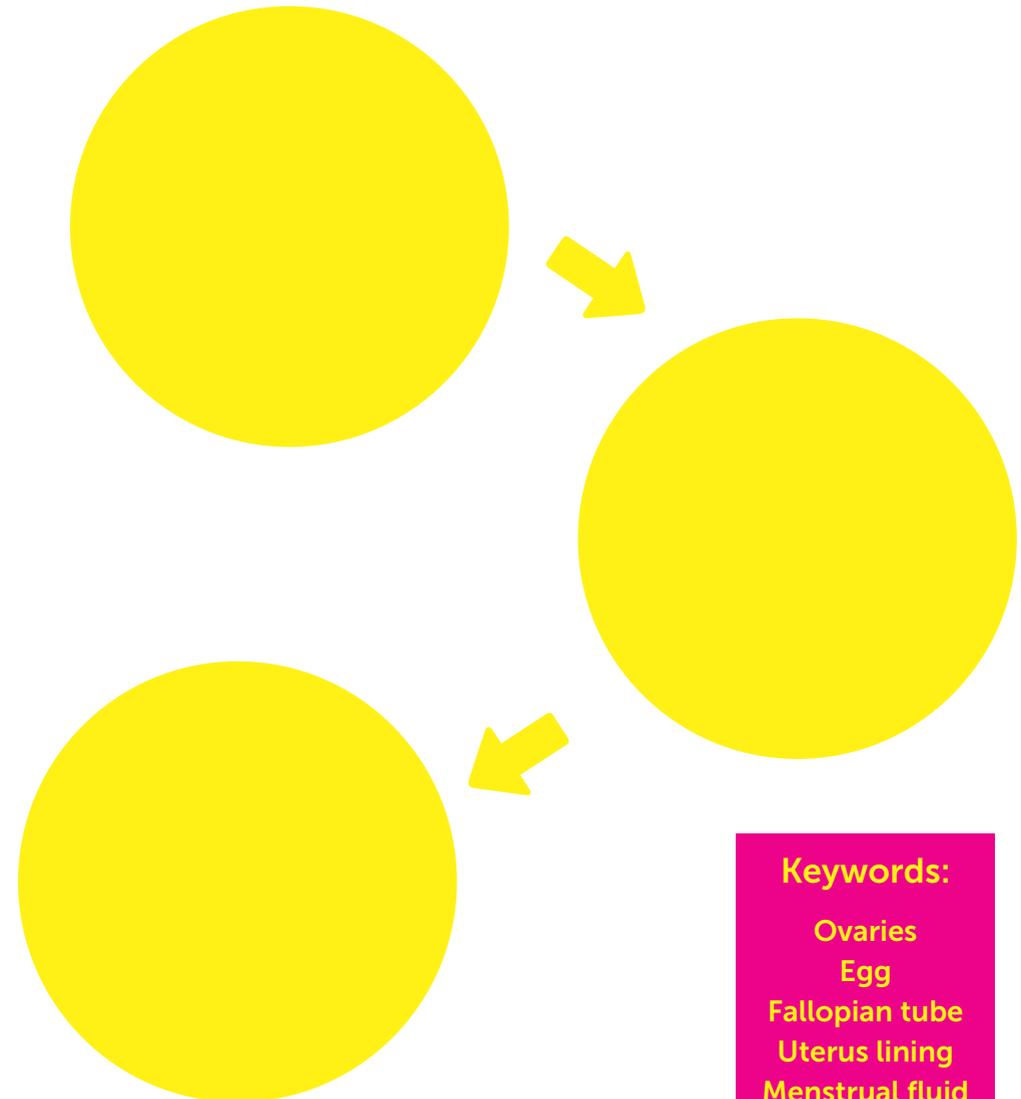
d. Why does the body produce discharge?

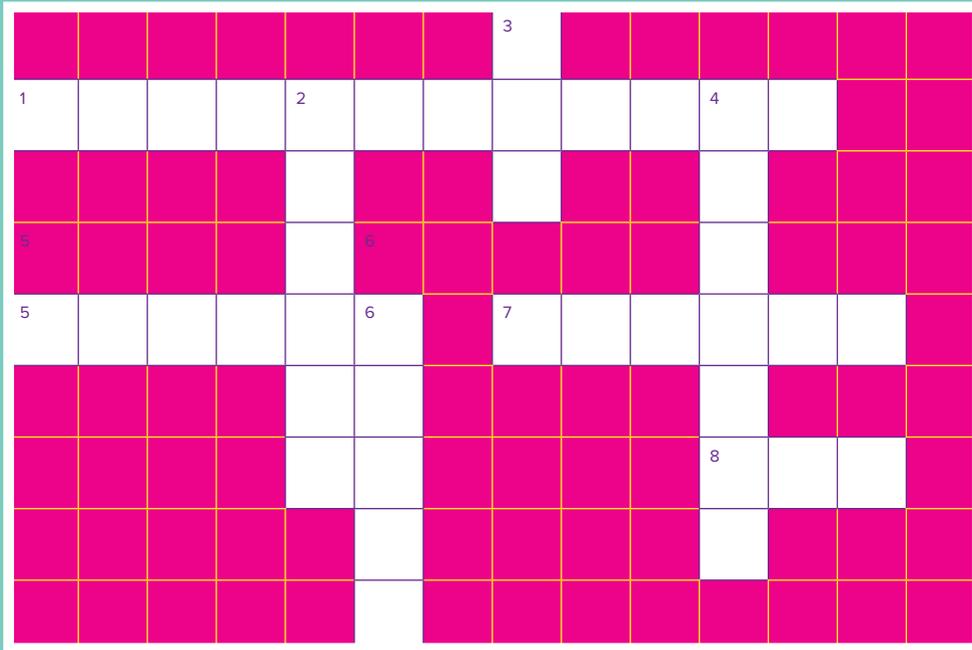
e. What should you wear while swimming on your period?

f. Who can you ask if you have a question about periods?

5

Do you know all there is to know about the menstrual cycle? In the circles below, draw a diagram showing us each stage (don't forget to use the keywords!)





Across

- 1 Name the process of the soft lining breaking away from the uterus and passing out the body. **(12)**
- 5 A dull pain in your abdomen area caused by the menstruation cycle. **(6)**
- 7 Each month the lining of this breaks away. **(6)**
- 8 The female reproductive cell. **(3)**

Down

- 2 Menstrual products that you can use when you swim. **(6)**
- 3 A sanitary item you put into your knickers. **(3)**
- 4 Where eggs are released from. **(7)**
- 6 Skin blemishes that can sometimes be caused by PMS. **(5)**

Across: 1. Menstruation, 5. Cramps, 7. Uterus, 8. Eggs
Down: 2. Tampon, 3. Pad, 4. Ovaries, 6. Spots



Still got questions?

Don't sweat it! We have it covered.

If you're still unsure about anything to do with that time of the month, there are loads of people you can ask and places you can look.

Feel like your period isn't quite what you expected?

Maybe it's just not turned up yet or your PMS is causing you to slam one too many doors? Anything that is worrying you can easily be sorted by visiting your doctor. They won't bite, promise!

Remember, all women in the world go through these body changes at some point in their lives, so if you do have a question or two, why not ask an adult who you trust.

It could be your Mum, older sister, close friend or even your teacher. And you can be sure that they will be talking from experience!

If you don't fancy talking about your concerns out loud, the NHS website has tons of useful information about periods and stuff.

You can find out more here:
www.nhs.uk/conditions/periods



Now
What?



betty.me

The fun doesn't end there...
Head on over to **betty.me**



From periods, puberty and boobs to friendships, relationships and fashion, our website was made to just for you! We've got your back with ***everything*** you want to know about growing up.



We're all about **girl power, confidence and body positivity**. We understand the struggles that come with periods and growing up and we're here to help.

At betty, **we share advice** on everything from how to tackle PMS spots and what to do when your crush walks towards you, to how to throw the best sleepover of your life. Plus, there's **loads of interviews** with our favourite celebs and social media stars.



Follow us on Instagram, Facebook,
Twitter and Snapchat at:



@bettycollective

cut it, save it



LOVE

GRL
PWR

Real girls are never
perfect.

And perfect girls are
never real.





it's perfectly natural

Say hello to us - we'd love to hear from you



@bettycollective